03 Jun 02

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
Air and Space Basic Course (AETC)
Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama 36112

LESSON PLAN

A1350, AGILE COMBAT SUPPORT

CONTENTS

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RECORD OF CHANGES

CHANGE NUMBER	REMARKS
New Lesson Plan	Supercedes ABC lesson A1350 dated 27 Aug 01

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

.

EDUCATIONAL GOALS

A1000 Area Objective: Apply aerospace power capabilities and officership principles to warfighting.

A1300 Phase Objective: Comprehend how the Air Force Core Competencies enhance warfighting.

<u>A1350 – AGILE COMBAT SUPPORT</u>

Lesson Objective 1: Know the historical development of the USAF Core Competency of Agile Combat Support.

Samples of Behavior:

(R/S) 1.1 - Identify historical examples of Agile Combat Support.

(S)   1.2 - Define the USAF Core Competency of Agile Combat Support.

Lesson Objective 2: Comprehend the significance of selected historical events in the development of the USAF Core Competency of Agile Combat Support.

Samples of Behavior:

(R/S) 2.1 - Explain the significance of the Third Air Depot Group in the development of the USAF Core Competency of Agile Combat Support.

(R/S) 2.2 - Explain the significance of the defense of Khe Sanh in the development of the USAF Core Competency of Agile Combat Support.

Lesson Objective 3: Comprehend how the USAF Core Competency of Agile Combat Support contributes to aerospace operations.

Sample of Behavior:

(R/S) 3.1 - Explain the role of the USAF Core Competency of Agile Combat Support.

Lesson Description: In this lesson, students discuss the importance of Agile Combat Support as one of the six Air Force Core Competencies. Students also discuss Air and Space Superiority from two historical perspectives: the 3rd Air Depot Group in the China-Burma-India theater of WWII and the defense of Khe Sanh in Vietnam. This lesson explores the impact of Agile Combat Support on aerospace operations and how this Core Competency relates to the Airman's perspective of military operations.

Prerequisites: None

Preparation: Read A1350, Agile Combat Support.
　　　　　　　　Read AFDD 1, pp. 34-35.

Optional: N/A

Rationale/Linkage: The A1300 Phase of instruction focuses on the Air Force Core Competencies. According to AFDD 1, "Core competencies are at the heart of the Air Force's strategic perspective and thereby at the heart of the Service's contribution to our nation's total military capabilities. . . whether as a single Service or in conjunction with the core competencies of other Services in joint operations" (27). Students must undestand the Air Force Core Competencies before a study of Joint Air Operations Planning (A1600 Phase) can commence. This particular lesson gives students a thorough understanding of Agile Combat Support, which is one of the six Air Force Core Competencies.

INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

1. **TITLE AND LENGTH OF SEMINAR:** Agile Combat Support (1:00)

2. **RELATION TO OTHER INSTRUCTION:** The A1300 Phase of instruction focuses on the Air Force Core Competencies. According to AFDD 1, "Core competencies are at the heart of the Air Force's strategic perspective and thereby at the heart of the Service's contribution to our nation's total military capabilities. . . whether as a single Service or in conjunction with the core competencies of other Services in joint operations" (27). Students must understand the Air Force Core Competencies before a study of Joint Air Operations Planning (A1600 Phase) can commence. This particular lesson gives students a thorough understanding of Agile Combat Support, which is one of the six Air Force Core Competencies.

3. **GENERAL METHOD OF INSTRUCTION:**

   a. **Presentation Method:** Guided discussion

   b. **Time Outline:**

Segment Time	Total Time	Description
0:10	(0:10)	Introduction
0:10	(0:20)	MP I: Agile Combat Support

0:25	(0:45)	MP II: Historical Examples
		    1. Third Air Depot Group
		    2. Khe Sanh

0:10	(0:55)	MP III: Current and Future Application
0:05	(1:00)	Conclusion

   c. **Instructor Preparation:**

   - Review the lesson plan.
   - Read A1350, Agile Combat Support.
   - Review AFDD 1, pp. 34-35.

   d. **Instructional Aids/Handouts:**

- Video Clip

e. **Student Preparation:**

- Read A1350, Agile Combat Support.
- Read AFDD 1, pp. 34-35.

f. **Strategy:** This lesson is a guided discussion. The instructor should get the students' attention by showing a video clip demonstrating many of the aspects of Agile Combat Support. During the motivation step, describe what it is like to fight without agile combat support. Begin with the knowledge-based questions about the USAF core competency of agile combat support. Use the historical examples to emphasize the key points in the definition of Agile Combat Support and bring out how the principles of war and the air and space power functions contributed to agile combat support in those examples. Next, get the students to discuss Agile Combat Support as it applies to them, both as ASBC students and as AF officers. Finally, wrap up the lesson by hitting the lesson objectives again and reminding them of the "so what." Core competencies are the basic areas of expertise that the Air Force brings to the fight. Airmen must be able to master these core competencies, if they are to employ aerospace power properly.

g. **References:** N/A

4. **DETAILS OF INSTRUCTION**:

   a. **Introduction:** 0:10 (0:10)
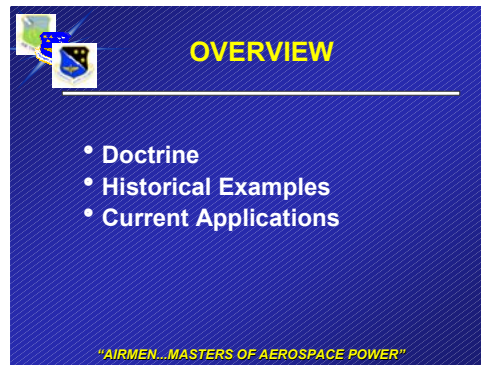
      1) //Attention//

*{**Instructor Note:** Show Agile Combat Support video clip.}*

      2) //Motivation//

Have you ever tried to take a shower in the morning and not had any hot water? Have you ever tried to operate a car that was in disrepair? What happens to your computer equipment when there is no way to cool it? There are certain comforts and support systems that we take for granted every day as we go to work. But has anyone ever thought about how those things are accomplished in the Air Force? As an Air Force Core Competency, Agile Combat Support answers all of those questions. We cannot be successful as warfighters without performing this crucial task. In fact, Joint Vision 2020 specifically identifies Agile Combat Support as one of the key elements to maintaining Joint forces on the battlefield. As you are about to see, Agile Combat Support allows us to be flexible and responsive in ways that are unique to our Service. As future commanders, you need to know how to sustain your troops before, during, and after an engagement. Therefore, it is paramount that we learn how Agile Combat Support can affect our warfighting efforts.
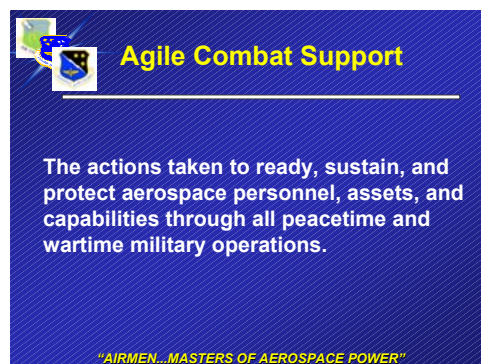
[SLIDE]

3) //Overview//

Here's how we'll discuss Agile Combat Support today. First, we will define Agile Combat Support using AFDD 2-4 as our reference. Once that is established, we will describe the core combat support principles that the Air Force has outlined for accomplishing Agile Combat Support in an efficient manner. We will then identify and discuss some historical examples involved in developing and defining Agile Combat Support. Finally, we will discuss how Agile Combat Support contributes to aerospace operations.

(TRANSITION): LET'S BEGIN BY EXPLORING THE DEFINITION AND CORE PRINCIPLES OF AGILE COMBAT SUPPORT.

  b. **MP I: Agile Combat Support:** 0:10 (0:20)

{Instructor note: The definition provided here is from AFDD 2-4. All of the other quotations in MP1 are from AFDD 1.}

[SLIDE]

LEAD OFF QUESTION (LOQ): WHAT IS AGILE COMBAT SUPPORT?

ANTICIPATED RESPONSE (AR): Agile Combat Support "includes the actions taken to ready, sustain, and protect aerospace personnel, assets, and capabilities through all peacetime and wartime military operations." The one thing that sets the Air Force apart from other services is the speed at which we are able to conduct operations to support national objectives. The Army and Navy have strike capability, but only the AF has Global Attack. The Army and Navy have mobility, but only the AF has Rapid Global Mobility. "A force that is poised to respond to global taskings within hours must also be able to support that force with equal facility." Agile Combat Support is not, however, a concept solely dedicated to deployed forces or contingency operations. It is an all-encompassing concept that must be applied to every aspect of the AF.

[SLIDE] (for definition)

FOLLOW UP QUESTION (FUQ): WHICH ASPECTS OF AGILE COMBAT SUPPORT DIRECTLY AFFECT DEPLOYED FORCES OR CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS?

*{**Instructor note**: Have students list their thoughts while you write them on the whiteboard, then compare their answers to the list in AFDD 1. For Example, if a student lists "chow hall," write it on the board, then show how that relates to "Services."}*

[SLIDE]

Agile Combat Support

- Maintenance
- Supply
- Transportation
- Communications
- Services
- Engineering
- Security
- Medical
- Chaplaincy

"AIRMEN...MASTERS OF AEROSPACE POWER"

AR: AFDD 1 lists the following as "elements of forward base-support structure:"

Maintenance
Supply
Transportation
Communications
Services
Engineering
Security
Medical
Chaplaincy

All of these need to be integrated into a "system of systems" with the ultimate goal of better support with a smaller "overall 'footprint' of forward deployed support elements."

FUQ: WHICH ASPECTS OF AGILE COMBAT SUPPORT INDIRECTLY AFFECT DEPLOYED FORCES OR CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS BY GIVING THE SERVICE AS AWHOLE THE SUPPORT IT REQUIRES?

AR: There are many aspects of Agile Combat support that could fall into this category. Some that are pointed out in AFDD 1 are:

Education
Home-Base Support
Family Support
Acquisition
Personnel System

[SLIDE]

Agile Combat Support

• Education
• Home-Base Support
• Family Support
• Acquisition
• Personnel System
• Others…

"AIRMEN...MASTERS OF AEROSPACE POWER"

*{**Instructor note:** This is a wide open topic. Let the students discuss any topic as long as they are able to show how that topic fits the definition of Agile Combat Support.}*

(TRANSITION): NOW THAT WE'VE EXPLORED THE USAF CORE COMPETENCY OF AGILE COMBAT SUPPORT, LET'S LOOK AT SOME HISTORICAL EXAMPLES THAT SHAPED THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGILE COMBAT SUPPORT.

    c. **MP II: Historical Examples:** 0:25 (0:45)

[SLIDE]

Third Air Depot Group:

LOQ: WHAT WAS THE MISSION OF THE 3RD AIR DEPOT GROUP (ADG)?

AR: The primary mission of the 3rd ADG was to support the "over the hump" missions flying supplies into China. The biggest portion of their mission was to overhaul aircraft engines. Secondary to this, but still very important, was repair, modification, and adaptation work that was too complex for front line units, but did not have to depend on work done in the US.

FUQ: HOW WAS THE 3RD ADG DIFFERENT FROM SUPPLY UNITS USED IN WWI?

AR: In WWI, highly mobile units were dispatched closer to the front lines, but by WWII, the extended range and technical complexity of aircraft required a larger support structure. Because these aircraft had longer range, a fixed facility, farther

away from the front lines could be put in place to support the mission. This reduced the forward footprint of deployed forces and started a trend that continues to this day.

FUQ: WHAT TYPE OF ADDITIONAL SUPPORT WAS NECESSARY FOR THE UNIT TO COMPLETE ITS PRIMARY MISSION?

AR: To begin with, the unit needed transportation to the theater of operations, both by land and sea. After arriving in India, the unit needed a level of force protection due to the Huq bandits that had assaulted some trains in the area. Upon arrival in Agra, the unit initially needed a lot of CE and civilian personnel support. Civil engineers were needed to design and build the runways, roadways and buildings that would be necessary for a unit this size. Civilian personnel support (what would be called "contracting" today) was necessary in order to manage all of the civilian labor used to accomplish these construction projects in a reasonable amount of time. In 1943 a major famine made food a high priority. Medical support was needed to fight off heat-related illnesses, malaria, and dysentery.

FUQ: WHAT WAS THE 3RD ADG'S IMPACT ON THE WAR EFFORT?

AR: This unit helped keep the war in China alive, thus keeping a second front open on the Japanese. The hump airline could not have existed without the support structure provided, in part, by the 3rd ADG. Overall, 650,000 tons of supplies were delivered to China. This rate at which supplies were flown per month rose from 1227 tons in December, 1942, to 71,042 tons in July, 1945. By July 1945, the 3rd ADG alone was handling 1320 aircraft per month.

(TRANSITION): THE 3RD ADG SUPPORTED A THEATER-LEVEL WAR EFFORT VERY EFFECTIVELY. NOW LET'S EXAMINE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN AGILE COMBAT SUPPORT PRINCIPLES ARE APPLIED TO A SINGLE BATTLE.

[SLIDE]

Khe Sanh

"AIRMEN...MASTERS OF AEROSPACE POWER"

Khe Sanh:

LOQ: WHY WERE THE FRENCH DEFEATED AT DIEN BIEN PHU?

AR: The French intended to cut off their enemy's supply line by occupying Dien Bien Phu, but the Viet Minh were able to cut off all supplies to the outpost. The French thought they could withstand the siege with supplies arriving by airlift, but attacks on the airstrip made it impossible for aircraft to land. Airdrop became their only means of supply, and that was slowly whittled away by the increase of Viet Minh anti-aircraft artillery in the region. The Viet Minh, on the other hand, were able to employ 30,000 support personnel without interdiction from the French.

FUQ: WHAT DID THE NORTH VIETNAMESE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH AT KHE SANH?

AR: The North Vietnamese wanted to repeat Dien Bien Phu. The idea was to cut off all supply lines to the base, bombard the base with artillery, then move in for the final kill. Some believe this was an attempt to re-enact Dien Bien Phu and drive the Americans out of the country.

FUQ: WHY WERE THE NORTH VIETNAMESE DEFEATED AT KHE SANH?

AR: Unlike the French at Dien Bien Phu, the US was able to sustain the base throughout the battle. In fact, the article states "at no time were the base's basic food fuel, and ammunition supplies near depletion." The runway was maintained in a usable state throughout the battle and even when aircraft could not land due to intense ground fire, alternative means of delivery turned out to be very effective. The resupply of the base allowed the Marines to keep the Vietnamese in check

while airpower delivered the decisive blow to the massed troops in the form of B-52 Close Air Support missions.

 (TRANSITION): WE'VE LOOKED AT THE DEVELOPING IDEAS OF AGILE COMBAT SUPPORT FROM AIRPOWER'S HISTORY. NOW IT IS TIME TO DISCUSS AGILE COMBAT SUPPORT AS IT APPLIES TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE.

   d. MP III: Current and Future Application: 0:10 (0:55)

[SLIDE]

LOQ: HOW DID YOU SEE AGILE COMBAT SUPPORT APPLIED IN YOUR COMMISIONING SOURCE?

AR: *{**Instructor note:** This should be an open discussion using ideas that came from each individuals personal experience. Did they ever use a gym? Did they ever ride in military-provided transportation? How did they get the uniforms they wore? Who wrote the curriculum they learned? Who taught the curriculum? Who conducted their commissioning physical? Etc.}*

FUQ: HOW DO YOU THINK AGILE COMBAT SUPPORT WILL BE USED IN AIRGAP?

AR: *{**Instructor note:** Since this exercise is a future event, the discussion will probably be a little less detailed than the previous discussion, but the students should be able to relate the general idea of using support functions within the parameters of the exercise.}*

FUQ: HOW DO YOU THINK AGILE COMBAT SUPPORT WILL AFFECT YOU IN YOUR AF JOB?

AR: *{**Instructor note:** Generally, students should be able to relate how they contribute to Agile Combat Support within their career fields and/or how Agile Combat Support helps them perform their job successfully. For example: Services provides meals and mail to deployed forces, or security forces protect the base so we can do our jobs without fear of intrusion.}*

   e. Conclusion: 0:05 (1:00)

      1) //Summary//

[SLIDE]

This lesson was your first step towards understanding the Air Force Core Competency of Agile Combat Support. We began by talking about and defining the core competency of Agile Combat Support, We then discussed the effect the 3rd Air Depot Group had on operations in the China-Burma-India Theater. Next, we saw how the Battle of Khe Sanh could have proven disastrous had it not been for the success of the resupply efforts. Finally, we examined how Agile Combat Support affects you, both as an ASBC student and an Air Force officer.

      2) //Remotivation//

Core competencies describe what the Air Force brings to the fight. Your comprehension of Agile Combat Support and the other Core Competencies will be essential to your success in the AIRGAP Blue Thunder II wargames. It is also essential that you understand the core competencies for your professional development as AF officers.

3) //Closure//

You must understand that the Air Force can't employ aerospace power without a tremendous amount of effort from many organizations working towards a common goal. Remember this quote from one of the best warfighters in our nation's history:

[SLIDE]

Gen. George S. Patton, Jr.

"Gentlemen, the officer who doesn't know his lines of communication and supply, as well as his tactics, is totally useless."

Quoted at a staff meeting during the drive for Berlin

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